

# Dexter City Update

Summer 2020

Volume 6, Issue 1

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## ELECTION UPDATES

### 2020 Upcoming Elections

August 4, 2020 – General Primary Election

November 3, 2020 – General Election



### Registering to Vote

Residents of the City of Dexter that are United States Citizens and are over the age of 18 may register to vote in person at the Dexter City Offices (8123 Main St., 2nd Floor, Dexter, MI 48130) or may mail a registration form to the address listed above. Residents may register to vote:

- By mail up to 15 days prior to an Election
- Between 14 days prior to an Election and Election Day, residents must register to vote in person at the Clerk's Office with either a valid driver's license showing the correct Dexter address, or a valid driver's license and proof of residency at the location they are attempting to register.

Though residents may register to vote on Election Day at the City Clerk's Office, we would like to strongly encourage residents to not wait until Election Day, and instead register to vote or change their voter registration address as soon as possible. Residents may not register to vote at their Precinct on Election Day. Residents may register to vote or obtain a voter registration form online at: <https://mVIC.sos.state.mi.us/RegisterVoter>. Mailed voter registration forms should be directed to the City Clerk at 8123 Main St., 2nd Floor, Dexter, MI 48130. The City Clerk's Office will be open the Saturday before each City Election from 9am - 5pm.

### Voting Absentee

All registered City of Dexter voters are eligible to request an absentee ballot by completing, signing, and submitting an absentee ballot application form. Application forms should be sent to the City Clerk by mail (8123 Main St., 2nd Floor), scanned and e-mailed to [Jbreyer@Dextermi.gov](mailto:Jbreyer@Dextermi.gov), or put in the City of Dexter's outdoor drop box in front of the Sheriff's Substation door at 8140 Main St. Applications may be requested by contacting the City Clerk or by visiting the Michigan Secretary of State's website at : [https://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,4670,7-127-1633\\_8716\\_8728-21037--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,4670,7-127-1633_8716_8728-21037--,00.html)

The Michigan Secretary of State's Office has mailed combined August/ November absentee ballot application forms to all registered voters in the State of Michigan who are not already on a permanent absentee voter list. For City of Dexter residents on the City's Permanent Absentee Voter List, the City mailed application forms the week of May 25th.

## ELECTION UPDATES (CONT.)

### Permanent Absentee Voter List

The City of Dexter maintains a permanent absentee voter list. This list will automatically generate an absentee ballot application form that will be mailed to your house for each election. Voters may request to be placed on this list by contacting the City Clerk. Voters may also register for the permanent absentee voter list by visiting the Washtenaw County Clerk's website at - <https://www.washtenaw.org/FormCenter/Clerk-25/Permanent-Absent-Voter-List-Registration-179>.

### Election Inspectors

The City of Dexter is currently recruiting for Election Inspectors to assist with administering elections at the polls on election days. Workers are paid for their service. Anyone interested in serving as an election inspector should contact Justin Breyer, City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager by e-mail at [Jbreyer@dextermi.gov](mailto:Jbreyer@dextermi.gov), or by phone at 734-580-2234. No prior experience is necessary; training will be provided.

## TORNADO SEASON TIPS

### Warning Signs - what to watch for:

- Dark, often greenish skies;
- Wall of clouds;
- Large hail;
- Loud roar - similar to a freight train.

### Where to take shelter:

- In a home: Basements offer the greatest safety. In homes without basements, take cover in the center part of the house, on the lowest floor, in a small room such as a closet or bathroom. Keep away from the windows.
- Driving a vehicle: Get out of the vehicle and take shelter in a nearby ditch or ravine; do not get under your vehicle. Lie flat and put your arms over your head.
- At work or school: Follow advanced plans to move to interior hallways or small rooms on the lowest floor. Avoid areas with glass.
- In open country: Lie in a gully, ditch or low spot in the ground and hold onto something on the ground if possible. Do not seek shelter in damaged buildings, they may collapse completely.

### Preparation:

Each tornado season, review with your family the area in the home that is designed as the shelter and practice having everyone in the family go there in response to a tornado threat. Develop an emergency communication plan in case family members are separated from one another.

### Disaster supplies

Have disaster supplies on hand, including: flashlights, extra batteries, battery operated radio, first aid kit, bottled water, canned food, bottle opener, and extra clothing

For more information, please visit: <https://www.washtenaw.org/1822/Emergency-Preparedness>

## CENSUS REMINDERS

Thank you to all of the residents that have participated in the 2020 Census. So far the City of Dexter has a 79% response rate. Population is a significant factor in determining the level of various types of funding we receive from the State of Michigan. Each home should have received a census form in the mail with an access code to complete the information online. If you did not receive information in the mail, you can still complete the form online at <https://my2020census.gov/>. For those that did not fill out the information online, the census began mailing paper forms in mid-April.

Completing the online or paper form will save you from having to have a Census worker come to your house. Below is additional information about the Census:

- It's quick and easy. The 2020 Census questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete.
- It's safe, secure, and confidential. Your information and privacy are protected.
- Your response helps to direct billions of dollars in federal funds to local communities for schools, roads, and other public services.

Results from the 2020 Census will also be used to determine the number of seats each state has in Congress and your political representation at all levels of government.



## CITY COUNCIL FILING DEADLINE

The deadline for City Council candidates to file for the November 3, 2020 General Election ballot to fill (3) three City Council seats is July 21, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. The qualifications for these offices are:

- (1) A candidate must be a registered elector residing within the boundaries of the City of Dexter for a minimum of one year prior to the date of the Election; and
- (2) Submit an Affidavit of Identity and City/Township Nonpartisan Nominating Petition bearing the signatures of a minimum of 15 (maximum of 30) qualified electors residing within the boundaries of the City of Dexter.

All petitions and forms may be requested by contacting the Dexter City Clerk at (734) 426-8303 or [Jbreyer@dextermi.gov](mailto:Jbreyer@dextermi.gov). The full text of all ballot proposals, a list of candidates, and election results for each election may be obtained at the Washtenaw County Clerk/Register's office, 200 N. Main St., Suite 120, Ann Arbor, MI 48104, telephone: (734) 222-6730 or <https://www.washtenaw.org/304/Elections>.

## MILL CREEK PARK TRAIL PHASE 2

Construction on the extension of the Mill Creek Park Path resumed on Monday, May 11, 2020. For safety reasons, please do not enter the construction area to attempt to use the trail before it is officially opened. There are no road closures expected with this project, but there may be some impacts to the existing trail where the new trail connects at the southernmost point of the boardwalk near the corner of Broad St. and Grand St.



## 5-YEAR PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN SURVEY

The Parks and Recreation Commission is seeking public input for the City's 2021-2026 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This Plan will chart the course for the City's parks and recreation services for the next five years. Community input will help identify goals and objectives as well as any major projects that the City should strive to undertake in this time frame.

The survey may be taken online at: <https://forms.gle/gLAEGC7cR7iaEioq5>. It is also available upon request in hard-copy format at the City office.

For more information, please contact Justin Breyer, City Clerk and Assistant to the City Manager, by e-mail at [Jbreyer@dextermi.gov](mailto:Jbreyer@dextermi.gov) or by phone at 734-580-2234.

## SAFE STREET CROSSING REMINDERS

According to State Law, drivers must yield to pedestrians within a crosswalk when the pedestrian is in or near the same half of the street as the driver. Drivers can choose to stop at a crosswalk to allow a pedestrian waiting to cross the street to cross, but it is not required regardless of the presence of a rapid flashing beacon. If you are a pedestrian, please check for traffic before using any crosswalk. Walk defensively and make eye contact with drivers to ensure that they see you. Never assume that you are seen or that a motorist will yield. Don't leave the curb or go into the path of a vehicle which is so close that the driver can't yield.





## BULK ITEM WASTE COLLECTION

With the rollout of the toter refuse and recycling system, there have also been changes to the collection of bulk items. One bulk item may be put at the curb for collection on the first Monday of each month. Bulk items should be placed at the curb between Sunday no earlier than 5:00pm and Monday no later than 6:00am. Residents that wish to dispose of additional material outside of the first Monday, should contact Waste Management at 866-797-9018.

The City typically offers additional bulk item collection for "Spring Cleanup" and "Fall Cleanup" on the third Mondays of May and October. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the spring bulk collection has been delayed to Monday, July 6, 2020.



## E-MAIL UPDATE

The City would like to strongly encourage residents to sign-up for the City's E-Mail Update. The City's E-Mail Update provides the most recent information on on-going City projects and services, including but not limited to: road improvement projects; road closures; trash, recycle, and yard waste collection; public hearings; and events. Residents may sign up for the E-mail Update by sending an e-mail to [CNicholls@Dextermi.gov](mailto:CNicholls@Dextermi.gov) or by visiting:

<https://dexter.broadcastgenius.com/f/1012>

## ROAD CONSTRUCTION– GRAND & HUDSON

Construction has started on Grand from Kensington to Hudson and Hudson from Ann Arbor St to Forest. Both roads are closed to thru traffic. The project is expected to be complete in late July/early August. For additional information on this project, please visit [https://www.dextermi.gov/government/road\\_projects.php](https://www.dextermi.gov/government/road_projects.php)



## CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT

The City's annual Water Quality Report describing the source and quality of your drinking water is available at:

[https://www.dextermi.gov/Departments\\_Services/Water\\_Sewer/Water\\_Quality\\_Report\\_2019.pdf](https://www.dextermi.gov/Departments_Services/Water_Sewer/Water_Quality_Report_2019.pdf)

To receive a paper copy in the mail, please e-mail [ADorney@Dextermi.gov](mailto:ADorney@Dextermi.gov) or contact the Utility Department at 734-426-4572.

## HIGH WATER USAGE

An unexpectedly high utility bill can be very challenging for a household budget. Typically, when a resident receives a high water bill, Utility Department staff is called to the home to help determine the cause; the top five are listed below. We hope that sharing them will help to prevent the shock of a high utility bill.

- Running toilet(s)
- Water softener problem
- Water back-up system on sump pump running
- Furnace humidifier issue
- Irrigation leak/running outdoor faucet

The simple way to double check that you are not using water unnecessarily is to turn off all of the water in your house and look at the water meter. If the numbers on the meter are increasing, even though everything is turned off, you likely have a leak. Staff often goes into a home and can immediately hear the water running; it can be easy to become accustomed to it as back ground noise. If you do hear water running, it is important to find its source, as even a small leak can greatly impact the bill.

If you receive a high bill that you will have trouble paying on time, please contact the City Office as soon as possible so that payment arrangements can be made.

## WATER RESTRICTIONS

As a reminder, the City prohibits outdoor water usage between 6 am and 10 am, with odd/even water restrictions. Residents and businesses with odd numbered addresses (ending in 1, 3, 5, 7, 9) may do outdoor watering only on odd numbered dates. Likewise, those with even numbered addresses (2, 4, 6, 8, 0) may do outdoor watering only on even numbered dates. A simple adjustment of the start time of your irrigation system control can achieve this.

Thank you for your cooperation as we work to protect and conserve our water resources.



## LAWN MAINTENANCE REMINDERS

It's been a rainy spring, and the grass and weeds are growing rapidly. As a result, the City is receiving complaints about unmaintained property. The Office of Community Development would like to remind property owners, including owners of rental property or vacant lots, that local ordinances require routine lawn maintenance. Grass and/or weeds exceeding eight inches in height are considered a public nuisance. Once a complaint is lodged, the Code Enforcement Officer must conduct an inspection, and issue a violation notice if a public nuisance is observed.

Failure to mitigate the violation (i.e. mow the lawn/pull the weeds) can result in the issuance of a ticket and possible fine(s). For more information about property maintenance and code enforcement, please contact the Office of Community Development 734-580-2233/35.

Also, please do not blow grass clippings into the street when mowing your lawn. These clippings travel into our storm sewer system which can cause the drains to clog. If you have a landscaping company that mows your lawn please pass this information along to them.

## CITY ORDINANCE REMINDERS

Did you know...

Dog waste must be collected and disposed of in a trash can. The City has provided trash receptacles and dog waste disposal units throughout town. Dog waste is not suitable for recycle, compost or storm drains. Not collecting dog waste or intentionally throwing into a City storm drain is an ordinance violation. (City Ordinance Sec. 10-37)

Trash cans, recyclables, and compost bags should be placed out at the street no earlier than 5 pm on Sunday. All materials need to be out at the curb by 7am Monday morning. (City Ordinance Sec. 38-74)

Riding a bicycle on the sidewalks downtown is not permitted. Bicycle riders should walk their bike on the sidewalk in the downtown area. This is especially important to avoid collisions right in front of entrances to our downtown businesses. (City Ordinance Section 54-133)



### PLEASE DON'T FLUSH "FLUSHABLE" WIPES

Certain brands of bathroom wipes are advertised as "flushable". In reality, this is not the case. As City Utility Staff performs preventative maintenance on the sewer system, piles of these wipes are found to have coagulated in the pipes. These piles of wipes can not only cause a back up in the line of the home using them, they can also lead to a back up in the sewer main causing damage to other properties in the area. Please prevent this from

happening by throwing wipes in the trash.

Other items that should not be flushed include diapers, paper towels, cooking grease, prescription drugs, and any garage waste products (i.e. oil, gasoline, antifreeze).

## OUTDOOR WARNING SIREN TEST

Washtenaw County's 87 warning sirens (including those in the City of Dexter) will be tested at Noon on the first Saturday of every month from March through October. If there is a threat of severe weather on the day of a test, it will be cancelled. Except for scheduled testing, the sirens will be activated for the following emergencies:

- The National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning
- A severe thunderstorm has been detected with damaging winds in excess of 75 MPH
- A hazardous materials accident requires immediate protective action by the public
- An attack on the United States is imminent, underway or has recently occurred

Warning siren activation is a signal to members of the public to immediately go indoors and monitor local Emergency Alert System media outlets for official information. Washtenaw County's emergency broadcasters are: WEMU 89.1 FM; WWWW 102.9 FM; WQKL 107.1 FM; WTKA 1050 AM; and WLBY 1290 AM.

## FIRE SAFETY - ESCAPE PLAN

The Dexter Area Fire Department would like to encourage all residents to create a fire escape plan. Below are topics that should be covered during your home fire escape planning session:

- Consider how you would escape from a fire in every room of your home and be sure to have two ways out, as the fire may block your main exit.
- If you must escape through a bedroom window, it is important that you remember to close the bedroom door before opening the window. This step will block airflow to the fire and provide you with protection from heat and smoke as you exit.
- Make sure all of your windows open properly and that everyone in your home knows how to unlock and open the windows.
- Consider purchasing an escape ladder to exit through a second story window.
- If a smoke alarm sounds and there is smoke in the house, everyone needs to exit the home as quickly as possible and meet at a pre-designated meeting spot away from the house, such as a mailbox, a large tree, or a barn. Only call 911 after you have exited the home.
- If people are sleeping in a bedroom and the fire is in the living area downstairs, it is going to make using the front door as an exit impossible. Gather your family members into a bedroom and close the bedroom door. Open the window, push the screen out and escape through the window using a portable escape ladder.
- If your family doesn't have an escape ladder and needs to go out a second floor window to escape, it is important to remember that homes often have windows that you can exit onto front porches, roofs or balconies. The fire department has ladders and can get you down from there. Be sure to identify these rooms with windows during your escape planning process. That way if a fire occurs you can move to those rooms, close the door, and then open the window and escape.
- If a bedroom window will not open and you need to escape from a fire by going out the window, first make sure the bedroom door is closed. Next, find an object or a piece of furniture that can break the glass. Use that object to clear all the glass out of the window frame before climbing out the window.



## DEXTER FARMERS MARKET

The Dexter Farmers market is opening Saturday, June 6th at 8:00 am.

Market hours: Sat 8:00 am-1:00 pm

3233 Alpine St, Dexter, MI 48130

At our opening in June, things will feel quite different from the environment we have been cultivating over the years! Many of the measures we will be taking are familiar from the expectations at your regular indoor grocery store;

- Please only send one person from your household to shop.
- Wear a mask.
- Wash your hands at our provided hand washing station (we also have hand sanitizer in the dispensers in the center of the market).
- Sadly, one of the most important messages we will be sending is: **please do not linger.**
- We will be allowing 20 customers into the market at a time, so please come with a patient mind, in case there is a wait. The traffic flow will be **one-way**, so there will be plenty of signs to let you know what to do. You will see very little product out on the tables, which will be missing any fabric decorations, but rest assured that we will have lots to sell you.
- Remember that the vendor is an expert in their field. Now is a great time to ask them to pick for you!

## PAINT DEXTER PLEIN AIR FESTIVAL UPDATE

The Dexter Arts, Culture, and Heritage Committee would like to announce that the 2020 Paint Dexter Plein Air Festival is moving forward, but is going to be modified to avoid gatherings of people in accordance with Covid-19 guidelines.



- Artists are still being invited to come and paint in the community.
- There will be no in-person Festival Tent, exhibit or public reception. Instead, an online exhibit will open at the end of the event for artists to sell their paintings to the general public.
- Paintings produced at previous Paint Dexter Plein Air Festivals that have not sold may also be submitted for sale.
- We will ask artists to maintain social distancing guidelines, and wear masks when unable to maintain at least 6' separation from other artists and area residents.
- We will not be hosting an adult workshop or children's event, but we are hoping to do something unique separately and at a later date. Any fees paid for these events will be refunded.

## SUMMER TAXES

### Summer Bills

Summer tax bills will be mailed at the end of June. If you have any questions about your tax bill, please contact the City Treasurer at 734-580-2231 or MSherry@Dextermi.gov

### Tax Deferments

Residents who are 62 years of age or older or the un-remarried surviving spouse of a person who was 62 or older at the time of their death; paraplegic or quadriplegic; or eligible serviceperson, veteran, widow or widower; blind; or totally and permanently disabled and who have a gross household income of less than \$40,000, may apply for a deferment of their summer or winter taxes (or both) by filing an Application for Deferment of Summer and Winter Taxes with the Treasurer prior to the due date of the taxes to be deferred. The form is available on the city's website or the Treasurer would be happy to mail one upon request.

### Tax Information

Tax information is available online at: [https://www.dextermi.gov/government/departments\\_and\\_services/finance\\_and\\_taxation.php](https://www.dextermi.gov/government/departments_and_services/finance_and_taxation.php). The information is updated in real time as payments are made.

## ASSESSMENTS AND UNCAPPING

Your taxes are calculated using the following formula: millage rate/1000 \* taxable value. The taxable value can only change each year by the rate of inflation or 5%, whichever is lower. For 2020, that rate was 1.9%. This "cap" remains in place each year until one of three things happens:

- Ownership of the property changed in the previous year.
- The property changes physically by the addition or removal of part or all of a structure (including completion of partial construction).
- The state equalized value of the property, which is based on the market, becomes lower than the taxable value.

Millage rates vary from year to year, but if one of these three things occurs your taxable value will "uncap" to reflect the change. Depending on the taxable value before the change occurred, this can sometimes be significant. Please contact the City Treasurer if you have questions.



The dollar bill graphic to the left depicts how your tax bill was divided between various governmental agencies in 2019.

**Automated Bill Pay:** The City can automatically deduct the balance due on your utility bill from your designated bank account, on the bill's due date. To sign up for this service, please fill out the form below and return it to the City Office.

**Credit Cards Online:** You can pay your bill online using a credit card by going to the City's website at: [https://www.dextermi.gov/government/departments\\_and\\_services/utility\\_billing.php](https://www.dextermi.gov/government/departments_and_services/utility_billing.php) and clicking on the Credit Card Payments link. You will need a PIN that is located on your bill, or you may call the City's Utility Billing Clerk at 734-580-2232 to obtain it. *There is a user fee for this service.*

**E-Mailed Bills:** The City encourages residents and businesses to sign up for emailed bills, which helps the environment and saves money. To do so, please email [eaiken@dextermi.gov](mailto:eaiken@dextermi.gov).

### Authorization for Automatic (ACH) Debits

I (we) hereby authorize the City of Dexter, hereinafter called ORIGINATOR, to initiate debit Entries and, if necessary, credit Entries and adjustments for any debit Entries sent in error to my/our bank account indicated below, and the depository/bank named below, hereinafter called DEPOSITORY, to debit/credit the same to such account.

Depository Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Routing #: \_\_\_\_\_ Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

Account Type (checking/Savings): \_\_\_\_\_

This authority is to remain in full force and effect until the ORIGINATOR has received written notification from me (or either of us) of its termination in such time and in such manner as to afford ORIGINATOR and DEPOSITORY a reasonable opportunity to act upon it.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

City of Dexter  
8123 Main St, 2nd Fl  
Dexter MI 48130  
(734) 426-8303

Mayor:  
**Shawn Keough**

Council Members:  
**Scott Bell**  
**Paul Cousins**  
**Donna Fisher**  
**Julie Knight**  
**Zach Michels**  
**James Smith**

City Staff  
**Courtney Nicholls**  
City Manager  
**Justin Breyer**  
Clerk & Asst to City Manager  
**Michelle Aniol**  
Community Development  
**Mike Auerbach**  
Assistant Planner  
**Dan Schlaff**  
Public Utilities Superintendent  
**Marie Sherry**  
Treasurer/Finance Director/  
Assessor  
**Carol Jones**  
Recording Secretary

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID PERMIT NO. 100  
DEXTER MICHIGAN

The City Offices are located at 8123 Main St, 2nd Floor, above the PNC Bank. Hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

**Elected Officials:**

Mayor  
Shawn Keough: SKeough@DexterMI.gov (313) 363-1434

Council Members  
Scott Bell: SBell@DexterMI.gov (734) 646-5465  
Paul Cousins: PCousins@DexterMI.gov (734) 548-3293  
Donna Fisher: DFisher@DexterMI.gov (734) 649-5169  
Julie Knight: JKnight@DexterMI.gov (734) 426-4961  
Zach Michels: ZMichels@DexterMI.gov (734) 726-0616  
Jim Smith: JDSmith@DexterMI.gov (734) 426-8885

**Staff:**

City Manager: CNicholls@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2229  
Clerk/Asst. to the Manager: JBreyer@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2234  
Treasurer/Finance/Assessor: MSherry@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2231  
Community Development: MAniol@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2233  
Assistant Planner: MAuerbach@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2235  
Utility Billing: EAiken@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2232  
Administrative Assistant: BTuscano@DexterMI.gov (734) 580-2230  
Public Works: KAugustine@DexterMI.gov (734) 426-8530  
Public Utilities: DSchlaff@DexterMI.gov (734) 426-4572

**Utilities After Hour Emergencies: (734) 368-5212**

## COVID 19

Due to the COVID-19 Virus, please keep an eye on the City's website, Facebook, and e-mail update for:

- 1) Service changes
- 2) Changes to meeting or event schedules
- 3) Reopening of the City Office